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Cover nose and mouth when coughing with tissue or flexed elbow
Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
SOUTHERN STAR

Mysuru tops Karnataka in COVID-19 tests per million

Epidemic under control as there are more number of negative cases, assures DC

Mysuru, Apr. 24 (RK&BCT)- In a news that gives renewed hopes to Mysuru district that has been declared as a COVID-19 hotspot by both Centre and State, a report from the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka, says that Mysuru district has topped the State in the number of tests conducted per million.

According to the report, among the 20 districts in Karnataka that have reported COVID-19 positive cases, the highest number of tests per million have been done in Mysuru district. The lowest is in Belagavi district. The Health Department data shows that Mysuru district has conducted 902 tests per million, while Belagavi has conducted 162 tests per million.

For the record, Mysuru recorded 88 COVID-19 positive cases (cumulative), the second highest in Karnataka after Bengaluru Urban that has recorded 101 positive cases.

In Mysuru, as on Apr. 23, there are 55 active cases and 33 persons have been discharged. As per the media bulletin released by Mysuru District Administration, till yesterday (Apr. 23), 2,774 persons have been tested and 2,686 samples were declared negative.

Full implementation of Centre's guidelines

Health officers who are in the knowledge of the testing process in Mysuru told *Star of Mysore* this morning that Mysuru has fully implemented the guidelines issued by the Centre in fighting the epidemic. "In letter and spirit, we have implemented the COVID-19 positive cases check guidelines issued by the Centre and we have reached the target level of testing," revealed an officer.

(See MYSURU on page 6)

DC, SP sacrificing family life to save Mysuru from virus: GTD

Mysuru, Apr. 24 (RK&BCT)- Chamundeshwari MLA G.T. Devegowda (GTD) has expressed his heartfelt gratitude to district and city-level officers, especially Deputy Commissioner Abhiram G. Sankar and Superintendent of Police C.B. Ryshyanth for their work in the ongoing COVID-19 crisis in Mysuru, a declared hotspot.

Speaking at an event in Jayapura yesterday where food grains and vegetables grown by farmers were handed over to the District Administration, GTD said that the officers have sacrificed their family life to save Mysuru from the epidemic. "You know DC Abhiram Sankar, who all the while preaching social distancing, is practicing the same at his home too? He has a small child at home and after going home from work, he (the DC) stays in a separate room where he has quarantined himself," the MLA said.

"Even SP Ryshyanth has not met his family members since the last 20 days. Given the kind of responsibilities the DC and SP have, they are required to be in the field and they are prone to infection. To ensure their family members and their safety, they have not met their family members, since 20 days at least," GTD said and added that the DC and SP are the unsung heroes.

The MLA also praised the efforts of Mysuru City Police Commissioner Dr. Chandragupta, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Dr. A.N. Prakash Gowda and District Health Officer Dr. R. Venkatesh.

M.G. Road Market open despite Minister's orders to close

Boti Bazaar Banana Mandi likely to be shifted to either APMC or Old RMC Yard

Mysuru, Apr.24 (RK,DM& BCT)- It was business as usual at the M.G. Road Market this morning despite Mysuru District Minister S.T.Somashekar's directive to completely shut down the vegetable market as there were numerous complaints about social distancing not being practiced and a series of violations in lockdown norms.

The Minister was addressing a COVID-19 review meeting at D.Devaraj Urs Hall at the Zilla Panchayat (ZP) office in city yesterday.

He had instructed the authorities to barricade and close the M.G. Road Market and shift the same to the sprawling Dasara Exhibition Grounds, where a market is already functioning post lockdown.

Krishnaraja MLA S.A. Ramdas and Chamaraja MLA L. Nagendra had drawn the attention of the Minister regarding unhygienic practices at the M.G. Road Market that could prove dangerous amid COVID-19 outbreak. The MLAs opined that the early morning crowd, the way the vendors dump vegetables on roads and footpath was potentially harmful to Mysuru and could endanger the lives of both the vendors and the buyers.

Today morning, the Market functioned as usual with over 70 to 100 vendors coming from various parts of Mysuru and there was a big crowd to purchase the vegetables.

(See M.G. ROAD MARKET on page 6)

STAR PUNCH By Satish Acharya

Helping Hands feed hungry stray dogs, birds

250 rotis, 35 pack biscuits, 300 kg food grains fed daily

Mysuru, Apr. 24 (KS)- Helping Hands, a Jain youth organisation in Mysuru, which has been feeding thousands of pigeons and crows in front of Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple at the North Gate of Mysore Palace, is now on a mission to feed stray dogs and birds around the Mysore Palace.

"The lockdown has affected all of us but has a big impact on stray animals and birds as they have no means of feeding themselves as all restaurants, roadside eateries, markets — where they had easy access to food — are closed. The stray dogs and birds are starving and will die in such a scenario," said Helping Hands President Mahaveer Khabiya.

He said that the members of Helping Hands are feeding dogs, crows and pigeons daily with rotis, biscuits and food grains. He added that the rotis are made from the same wheat flour that is consumed by humans. The members bring more than 250 rotis and feed strays and bring about 300 kg of food grains to feed the pigeons every day.

Their daily feeding routine begins at 5.45 am, Mahaveer said adding that before feeding, the place is cleaned and then the food grains to pigeons, rotis and biscuits for stray dogs are fed besides placing a tub of drinking water for them. The rotis are made at homes and at each home, over 20 rotis are made and pooled in. Daily, the distribution goes on till 7.30 am.

The members are accompanied by their President Mahaveer Khabiya, Secretary Anand Patwa, Treasurer Rajan Baghmar, Manohar Sankla, Jambu Lodha, Pavan Sancheti, Adesh Lodha, Goutham Gandhi and others.

Badavara Bandhu Charitable Trust: Badavara Bandhu Charitable Trust, through its Roti Bank project, is distributing 500 food packets to the needy in city daily.

Trustee Budhmal Baghmar said that ever since the lockdown was imposed, Roti Bank is distributing 500 food packets to the poor and needy and added that the food packets are being distributed at Gandhinagar, B.M. Sri Nagar, Kyathamaranahalli, Medar Block, Bamboo Bazar, J.P. Nagar, Hinkal and other areas.

He said that though there are Roti Bank booths, distribution of food at the booth has been stopped as it would lead to a large crowd. As social distancing cannot be maintained at the Roti Bank booth, food packets are taken to various areas and distributed among the poor and the needy.

Under the leadership of Trustees Budhmal Baghmar, Prasanraj Surana, Subhashchand Dhoka, Munnalal Sethiya and Goutham Bafna, members Ramesh Ranka, Padamchand Sancheti, Dinesh Ranka, Subhash Darada, Hitesh Makana, Goutham Patva, Deepak Bantia and Ashish Khabiya are distributing food packets by dividing themselves into groups in various localities.

Kindness Society installs plastic bins in all wards to feed stray animals

Urges residents to put kitchen waste in bins for hungry animals

Mysuru, Apr. 24 (PM&KS)- The Indian Society of Kindness for Cows, Organisms and Nature (ISKCON) Trust in association with Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) launched an initiative to feed stray animals in MCC limits by placing two plastic bins at designated places in all 65 wards of the city and asking the residents to put kitchen wastes and water separately in the two bins to feed the hungry animals and quench their thirst.

The initiative was launched on Apr. 23 near the Mysuru District Journalists Association (MDJA) on Tyagaraja Road by MCC Additional Commissioner M.N. Shashikumar in the presence of ISKCON Trust Trustee Dr. S.K. Mittal, former MLA Maruti Rao Pawar, Corporators M.V. Ramprasad and B.V. Manjunath and others. Shashikumar said that feeding stray animals was a good deed and added that the MCC and Corporators would extend their co-operation to the Trust.

Dr. S.K. Mittal, who is also the Programme Convenor, said that 15 places would be identified in each ward and two bins — one for food and the other for water — would be placed and the residents of the ward will be urged to put food and water to the bins. He further said that the Trust volunteers and MCC staff would oversee the cleaning of bins and other maintenance besides stating that this initiative would not be limited only during the lockdown period but would be continued further. Residents would be urged to dump kitchen wastes that are fit to be consumed by the stray animals, he added.

ISKCON Trust Trustee Dr. S.K. Mittal, MCC Additional Commissioner N.M. Shashikumar, Corporators B.V. Manjunath, M.V. Ramprasad and others are seen during the launch of the feeding the stray animals initiative by ISKCON Trust and MCC near Mysuru District Journalists Association at K.R. Mohalla on Thursday.

VOICE OF THE READER

Right time for MCC
to implement online payment of property tax

Sir,

The Mysore Grahakara Parishat (MGP) has been highlighting and reiterating every year the need to alleviate the sufferings of the prompt and genuine tax-payers to stand in long queues at the Zonal Offices of Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) to pay the property tax.

Added to this is the insult to pay a tidy sum to the so-called non-official form-filling assistants for whom pandal with tables and chairs are arranged, again, non-officially.

In the lockdown times, it is not advisable to make senior citizens wait outside the Zonal Offices maintaining the mandatory social distance.

When every other revenue collecting agency such as Electricity Corporations, water supply, telephone, RTO, LIC, Railways, KSRTC etc., and private service providers like MOS, Telcos, Banks, are able to make online payment much to the relief of the common citizen, I wonder what is preventing the MCC to do the same, especially at these troubled times of lockdown due to COVID-19.

This is the right opportunity to rise to the occasion and implement the online payment system. MCC will be highly appreciated for this timely gesture.

Hope, the MGP will once again take up the issue seriously at the right levels of MCC, Corporators and MLAs.

— Prof. B.S. Shankara (Retd.)
Mysuru
22.4.2020

Dr. Rajkumar's 92nd birth anniversary in Mysuru

As part of Thespian Dr. Rajkumar's 92nd birth anniversary today, the statue of the late actor at Dr. Rajkumar Park near Chamaraja Circle in Mysuru was garlanded under the aegis of the District Administration. Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) Commissioner Gurudatta Hegde, Kannada and Culture Department Assistant Director H. Channappa, Information and Public Relations Department Assistant Director Raju and others were present.

Corona Warriors — Pourakarmika Nagamma, ASHA Activist Divya, Doctor Manjunath, Policemen Doddaiah and Boraiah — were felicitated by MLA L. Nagendra and State BJP Co-Spokesperson Raghu Kautilya at a programme organised by Dr. Raj Shiv Sainya Shivarajkumar Abhimanigala Sangha at Dr. Rajkumar Park premises as part of Dr. Rajkumar's birth anniversary. Former Karnataka Exhibition Authority (KEA) Chairman B.P. Manjunath, Koppalu Somanna, Sangha President B.S. Ravi, B.S. Mahesh, Mahadeva, Arun Kumar, Ganesh, Neelakantha and others were present.

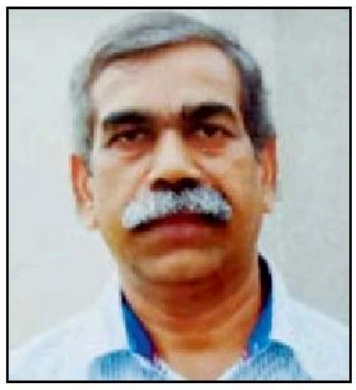
Madikeri DCF passes away

Mysuru, Apr. 24- T.P. Shivaiah (59), Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) at Madikeri Wildlife Division, passed away this morning at Jayadeva Hospital in Mysuru following heart attack.

He leaves behind his wife Sarala, one son, one daughter and a host of relatives and friends. His son is in the USA and daughter in Australia.

Last rites were performed at his native place Shanthahalli in Somwarpet taluk of Kodagu district this evening.

Profile: Shivaiah joined the Forest Department as a Range Forest Officer (RFO) in 1984-85 and had served at various places. He was promoted as the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) and had served for a few years before being promoted as the DCF last year. He was appointed as DCF (Wildlife) in Madikeri Wildlife Division six months ago.



T.P. Shivaiah

Indian Newspaper Society
condemns attack on Senior Journalist Arnab Goswami and his wife

New Delhi, Apr. 24- The Indian Newspaper Society (INS), an apex body of Print Media Industry, has strongly condemned the dastardly attack on Senior Journalist Arnab Goswami and his wife Samyabrata Ray in Mumbai.

"This act shows how goons belonging to political parties have scant respect for the freedom of expression," stated a press release from Mary Paul, INS Secretary General.

The INS has urged the Maharashtra Government to take strict action against the offenders while ensuring safety and security of journalists. Such assaults are indefensible and need to be universally condemned, the release said and added that INS is also of the view that frequent attacks on Journalists, and the Media, through abuse of power is a grave threat to the freedom of the Press and also an attack on right to think, express and speak freely in our democratic country.

MUDA donates
Rs.1 crore to CM's Relief Fund

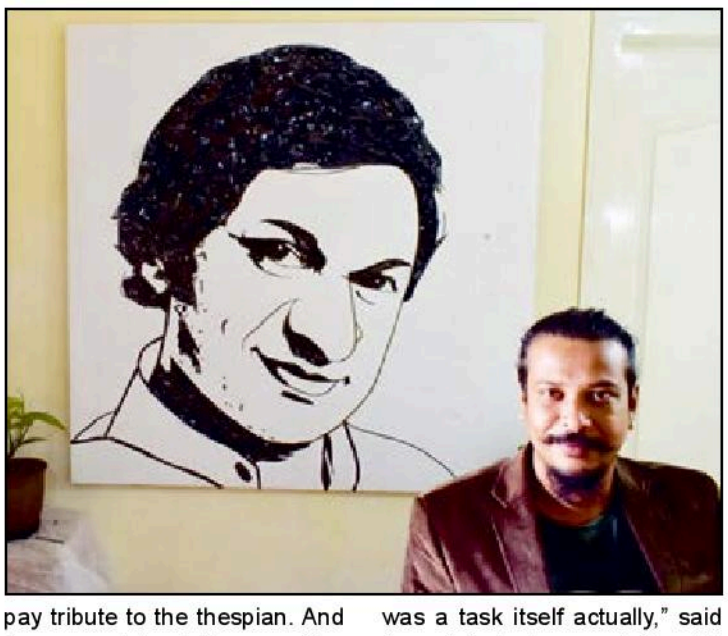
Mysuru, Apr. 24- Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) has donated Rs. 1 crore towards CM's Relief Fund in fight against COVID-19.

With consent from all its members, the cheque was handed over to the Urban Development Department Principal Secretary on Monday.

A tribute to Kannada matinee idol

Mysuru, Apr. 24- City-based artist L. Yogananda, who was in news with his artistic way of creating awareness about the Coronavirus and importance of following lockdown guidelines, too is locked inside his art studio at Vijayanagar here.

Yet, the artist, who happens to share his birthday with matinee idol Dr. Rajkumar and God of Cricket Sachin Tendulkar today, finds his own way to pay tribute to the legendary Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar by creating a portrait using audio tapes.



"Artists are facing problem to find materials for the art work as no shops are open. So, I was looking for some materials in my studio and found audio cassettes here as I had collected it for my previous works. So thought of using the same and pay tribute to the thespian. And to my good, I got the cassettes of the film 'Bhakta Prahlada' in which Dr. Rajkumar himself has enacted and for plywood used my old portrait and finding glue was a task itself actually," said the artist who has made the video of his work and posted on social media.

To watch his work visit ://youtu.be/JKksanlZV34

LOCKDOWN: Masons, bar-benders turn vegetable vendors, milk sellers

By Rajkumar Bhavasar

Mysuru, Apr.24- Having lost their regular income due to COVID-19 lockdown, occupational workers are looking at other means for their livelihood and they have found that vegetable vending is the best alternative source of living.

With occupational workers resorting to vegetable and fruit vending, many roads of the city are dotted with these roadside sellers. These vendors, after finding suitable spots on roadsides which are wearing a deserted look due to lockdown, camp at vantage spots to sell their vegetables and fruits.

With all shops shut due to the lockdown, most of the residents in nearby areas prefer to buy vegetables and fruits from these temporary roadside sellers rather than go to a distance, scouting. As the authorities have imposed limited restrictions on sale of fruits and vegetables, these street sellers seem to be having a good time with buyers too patronising them.

Other means of earning

Most of the occupational workers, labourers and other daily wage workers are forced to look at other means of earning and they have found that the best way of earning their daily bread is to temporarily take up roadside vegetable vending through push-carts or by camping on road sides. These vendors are making the best use of the ease on restrictions with regard to distribution of milk and sale of fruits and vegetables.

R. Rajesh, a mason for the past 15 years, has now turned to vegetable vending. Somanna, an agriculture labourer, is now selling coconuts. Malligamma, who worked as a domestic help, has resorted to roadside vegetable vending while Rangaswamy, a construction worker, sells milk. Although what they are doing now is not their regular occupation, these labourers have no other sources of income and as such they have taken up vegetable and fruit vending as an alternative means of livelihood.

A bright idea

Rajesh says that his livelihood was snatched by the lockdown as all commercial and other activities came to a grinding halt. "I used to get daily wages working as a mason. I was deeply disappointed when everything came to a halt all of a sudden. When I was thinking about what to do next, the idea of vegetable vending flashed in my mind and I wasted no time in entering into this business," he says.

So is the case of Malligamma, who worked as a domestic help before the lockdown. Now she is selling vegetables in a pushcart and is earning some money.

Farm labourer Somanna, who faced a lot of hardship in the early days of the lockdown, has now taken up coconut vending. He earns an average of Rs.240 every day by selling about 120 coconuts with a profit margin of Rs.2 per coconut.

Rangaswamy, a bar-bender engaged in the construction industry, was thrown out of work due to lockdown, following which he has resorted to door-to-door milk vending, earning about Rs.75 per day, enough for his daily needs.

Sales at HOPCOMS outlets more than double

Due to lockdown, the volume of sale of fruits and vegetables at almost all HOPCOMS (Horticultural Produce Co-operative Marketing Society) outlets in the city, has more than doubled in the past couple of weeks. In the pre-lockdown period, HOPCOMS used to sell 7 tonnes of fruits on an average every day. But now this figure has touched 15 tonnes. So is the case in respect of vegetables. Among the fruits that are much in demand include apple, orange, grapes, pomegranate and melons.

With COVID-19 lockdown in place, HOPCOMS has also resorted to home delivery of fruits and vegetables through vehicles. Deputy Director of Horticulture Rudresh attributes the surge in the sale of horticultural produce to people staying indoors. As people are enjoying family life by remaining in homes and preparing food as per their own food habits and taste, the sale of fruits and vegetables have seen a spurt in demand post-lockdown, he said.

Among the vegetables that are much in demand include beans, carrot, beet root, ladies finger, brinjal, cauliflower and capsicum. However, more than fruits, vegetables are easily available in city as there are many street vendors.

Chamundeshwari Constituency farmers donate vegetables, food grains

Mysuru, Apr. 24 (PM&KS)- The farmers of various Gram Panchayats in Chamundeshwari Constituency, under the leadership of MLA G.T. Devegowda (GTD), donated a large quantity of food grains and vegetables to be distributed among the needy and the same was handed over to the District Administration yesterday by MLA G.T. Devegowda and District Minister S.T. Somashekar at Jayapura Gram Panchayat premises.

While 4,000 kg cabbage, 2,000 kg pumpkin, 1,000 kg banana, 1,000 tomato, 800 kg green chilli, 3,000 kg salt, 7,000 kg onion, 130 quintal rice, 1,000 kg wheat flour, 3,500 kg dal, 100 kg ragi, 3,100 litres cooking oil and 3,250 kg watermelons were collected from the donors in villages coming under Jayapura Gram Panchayat, a total of 145 quintal of rice was collected from various Gram Panchayats in Mysuru taluk limits.

Meanwhile, MYMUL President, who handed over food grains and vegetables worth more than Rs. 16 lakh, which was collected from his side said that the credit should go to the villagers who donated food grains and vegetables to be distributed to the needy and added that he was distributing 1,000 litres of milk to the residents of slums every day. Food grains kits were distributed symbolically to the needy on the occasion. Mysuru Taluk Tahsildar K.R. Rakshith said that 7,000 kits have been distributed to the needy so far.

Farmers lauded

Farmer Kallahalli Rajanna of Jayapura Hobli donated 1 tonne tomato, Swamy of Baradanapura: 800 kg green chilli, Mahesh of Ballahalli: 1 tonne banana and Mahesh of Ballahalli: 3 tonne pumpkin, Mohammed Ali of HMI Fruits in Jayapura donated 3 tonne watermelons. Apart from the above, many farmers donated vegetables they had grown. District Minister S.T. Somashekar, who received the food grains and vegetables from the farmers thanked them and enquired their well-being.

District Minister lauds GTD

As MLA G.T. Devegowda had taken the farmers of his Constituency into confidence and collected a large quantity of food grains and vegetables to be distributed to the needy, District Minister S.T. Somashekar lauded GTD on behalf of the State Government.

Farmers are real Gods

"Farmers have given banana, cabbage and other vegetables they had grown and also various food grains free of cost despite them facing many problems. The farmers have taken loans, faced crop loss and did not get the minimum money for their produce. Despite all this, they have donated liberally and it will not be wrong if farmers are called as real Gods," opined G.T. Devegowda.

Namma Mysuru in safe hands of POURAKARMIKAS

Pic. 1: ***Pourakarmikas at work as usual on a city street.*** *Pic. 2 and 3:* ***Pourakarmikas availing the special bus facility for work.***

By M.B. Pavan Murthy

Mysuru, Apr. 24- "Wash your hands with soap, maintain hygiene, use hand sanitiser and ensure social distancing." This has been the new mantra amidst the lockdown due to the outbreak of the deadly Coronavirus, which has now marked its presence in 184 countries across the globe.

Who are the frontline warriors who are risking their lives every day, coming out of the comfort of their houses to ensure that those staying at home feel comfortable, are cared for and feel safe?

They are the doctors, healthcare workers, Police personnel and last but not the least the employees of Municipal Corporations in each city across the country who too have to step out of their houses, go to each house to collect waste, clean roads, fumigate streets, clean the manholes and keep the sewage system running. And the employees of MCC (Mysuru City Corporation) are no different.

Day begins at 6 am

Each day, in spite of the barricades in each street and many other restrictions in place, the Pourakarmikas (700 permanent employees and 1,648 contract employees) of 'Namma Mysuru' have to reach their respective Zonal Offices and start their day at 6 am, sweeping, blowing their whistles, pushing their carts and collecting waste from each house to ensure that all the citizens maintain hygiene at home and outside.

And their role now, amidst the deadly outbreak of Coronavirus is even more significant. MCC has ensured that all its Pourakarmikas have gloves, masks and other protective gears with them while on duty. Also, their working hours have been reduced to help minimise the risk.

Now, their working hours is from 6 am to 10.30 am as opposed to the earlier timings of 6.30 am to 2 pm. All the employees have been strictly instructed to maintain social distancing while on duty and off duty too.

MCC Commissioner Gurudatta Hedge has instructed all the respective officers to make sure that the Pourakarmikas follow safety protocol without fail.

Waste collection from quarantined houses

In the recent times where there have been reported incidents of pelting stones at doctors treating COVID-19 patients and at Police Officers showing the sheer apathy of people towards such things, imagine the plight of those Pourakarmikas who as part of their duty, have to collect garbage from the houses where people are under quarantine.

The MCC has provided nine exclusive vehicles for collecting waste from quarantined houses, with a driver and one Pourakarmika assigned in each area, provided with PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) dress kits which they have to wear compulsorily to avoid the risk of contracting the virus.

Special training has been provided for such Pourakarmikas on how to deal with the waste collected from the quarantined houses and how to dispose of the waste too. "The waste collected from these quarantined houses are to be treated as bio-medical waste. The dry waste management has been outsourced to an external agency — Sri Consultants and that of wet waste management is being taken up the MCC itself. The wet waste is disposed of in a scientific way, by digging up deep pits and then burying the waste," MCC Health Officer Dr. D.G. Nagaraj, told *Star of Mysore*.

Health check-up for Pourakarmikas

"Earlier, all the Pourakarmikas used to have a health check-up once in six months. But now with these Pourakarmikas being exposed to so much risk, the Government has ordered that all the employees compulsorily undergo health screening regularly. Hence, the MCC has collaborated with six hospitals in city — Jayadeva Cardiovascular Institute, Suyog Hospital, Clear Medi Radiant Hospital, Medicure Diagnostic Hospital, Cauvery Hospital and JSS Hospital. Pourakarmikas may choose the one closest to their house and go get their health screened," said MCC Health Officer Dr. M.S. Jayanth and added that the health screening is being taken up in phases.

Transportation facilities

To facilitate the commute of Pourakarmikas amidst the lockdown and with no city bus facilities, MCC has arranged for pick-up and drop of these employees by arranging two city buses from Mandakalli and Bharathnagar.

Saluting sewage workers too

With Mysuru being among the top cleanest city in the country, credit is due for the 231 sewage workers of the MCC too along with the Pourakarmikas. And now, with the virus outbreak, the role of these sewage workers in ensuring proper sewage management is important too and they are doing it with utmost diligence and complete dedication.

Apart from cleaning the manholes in city, these workers are also part of the fumigation team, covering each street in the city, fumigating chemical disinfectants using the jetting sprays. Risking their lives, these workers are cleaning the sewer systems, ensuring that the sewage doesn't overflow on to the streets, especially at a time when hygiene and cleanliness are of great importance. All the workers have been provided with masks, hand gloves, sanitisers and rubber boots by the MCC to ensure safety.

Amidst the Corona outbreak and with so many other diseases out there, the Pourakarmikas are doing such a great job, knowing the risks involved. Although the MCC has provided them with masks, gloves, sanitisers and other safety gears, we have urged the MCC officers to provide extra care and ensure complete safety of all the Pourakarmikas."

— Mysuru District Pourakarmika Welfare High-level Committee President N. Mara

MCC has provided us with masks, gloves and all safety equipment. They have also arranged breakfast and lunch for us apart from arranging bus facility. We too are scared to come out of our houses due to this virus but it is our duty and hence we are coming to work every day."

— Rathna, a MCC woman Pourakarmika

MCC has given us gloves, masks and sanitisers for carrying out our duties responsibly and safely. Many of us are working in second shift to fumigate streets with chemical disinfectants. The MCC Commissioner and Officers are ensuring that we are all safe and taken care of."

— Palani, MCC sewage worker

In spite of MCC making travel arrangements for us to reach the office in the morning, it is difficult on some days to even reach the bus stop since there are barricades all along and in some areas, the residents themselves have created barricades and closed up the roads. During such times, we have to take detour resulting in delay in reaching the bus stop."

— Ramesh, Pourakarmika

MCC sewage workers using jetting machine to spray disinfectant. Picture right shows a Pourakarmika in PPE dress, who collected waste materials and garbage from a quarantine home, being sprayed disinfectant.

Tired of standing in Queue? Here's a novel Idea!!

You need not stand in the queue anywhere, anymore. You just need a pair of slippers for it. Today there was an announcement by MCC Ward No. 3 Corporator K.V. Sridhar that ration kits would be distributed to poorest of the poor and those without BPL cards affected by the COVID lockdown. Beneficiaries, who thronged the venue near Surya Bakery in Hebbal before the scheduled time, were found leaving the footwear in the social distance box instead of standing in the queue. Social distancing is a concept which allows us to keep away from large gathering, avoid crowded places and keep a safe distance from others to prevent the spread of novel Coronavirus. But in Namma Mysuru social distancing seems to have gone for a toss. In the picture, several people sitting on the pavement have marked their place in the box by laying down their chappals. A novel idea indeed! [Pics by M.N. Lakshminarayana Yadav]

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M.G. Road Vegetable Market open

(Continued from page 1)

Official sources told *Star of Mysore* that as the M.G. Road Market is very sensitive issue, a sudden decision to shift the Market was difficult and could prove counter-productive. But officials said that steps will be taken to ensure social distancing and maintain hygiene.

The Minister's directive also came after a social media outrage over unhygienic conditions of the M.G. Road Market where cleanliness-conscious Mysureans had posted that if not shut, the Market will turn a COVID-19 hotspot. Social media users had termed the Market as "unhygienic Road Market" where farmers got their produce and dump on the roads while consumers crowd to buy them throwing social distancing norms into thin air.

Netizens had posted several photos and videos on the social media drawing the attention of the authorities including Deputy Commissioner, MCC Commissioner and all the elected representatives of Mysuru on how even the footpaths had been occupied by vegetable vendors.

The videos showed how vegetables are dumped on the roadsides and the median causing inconvenience to the buyers, traffic jams and an overall unhygienic environment. Also, the posts highlighted how people were crowding the market in complete violation of social distancing and lockdown norms that could prove costly for Mysuru which is already bearing the brunt of COVID-19 outbreak.

Banana Mandi to be shifted

Following complaints, District Minister Somashekar had also directed the authorities to shit the Banana Mandi at Boti Bazaar on Aane Sarot Road to either APMC Market Bandipalya or Old RMC Yard on Sayyaji Rao Road. This step too was to ensure social distancing at the crowded market that is a storehouse of all varieties of bananas and where traders do wholesale and retail marketing.

Following the Minister's directive, Development Officer of Mysuru City Corporation Nagaraj led a team this morning along with Police security from Devaraja Sub-division and asked the banana traders to close their outlets at Boti Bazaar and shift to APMC Market or Old RMC Yard. Loudspeaker announcements were made asking the traders to shift from tomorrow.

Mysuru tops in COVID-19 tests

(Continued from page 1)

While testing, first the high-risk patients (with fever, breathlessness, respiratory illness and cold symptoms) are tested and second, their primary contacts are tested. Third, their secondary contacts are traced and tested and these are low-risk patients. "We conduct tests on general population based on the availability of testing kits. So far in Mysuru, we have tested over 3,000 samples," the officer said.

In Mysuru, samples are tested at Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) located at Microbiology Wing of Mysore Medical College and Research Institute (K.R. Hospital) led by Dr. Amrutha. Samples from Mysuru, Mandya, Kodagu and Chamarajanagar are tested at VRDL, the officer added.

Epidemic under control

Addressing media persons in city yesterday, Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Abhiram G. Sankar said that the Coronavirus epidemic is under control in Mysuru now as there are more number of negative cases. These reassuring words that have come from the person (DC) who is at the forefront of COVID-19 battle in Mysuru are likely to provide further solace to the residents of Mysuru.

"There is no reason to panic. We have so far registered 88 positive cases and of that, 40 percent of the infected have recovered. 33 persons have been discharged. Two patients were in ICU and of them, one patient has been shifted to the general ward. Considering these factors, it can be said that the situation is under control," he said.

The Deputy Commissioner revealed that the testing process of all the employees from Nanjangud-based Jubilant Generics has been completed. However, their primary and secondary contacts need to be tested. Of that only two per cent may test positive or may not. "300 persons have ben quarantined at various hotels and lodges and over 300 persons have been kept under home quarantine," the DC said.

COVID - 19 UPDATE

MYSURU

Persons observed till date	:	4,762
Persons who have completed 14 days' isolation	:	2,442
Persons isolated in home for 14 days	:	2,265
Persons isolated in hospital active cases	:	55
Total samples tested	:	2,774
Samples found negative	:	2,686
Samples found positive (cumulative)	:	88
Persons cured / discharged	:	33
Death toll so far in Mysore	:	0

MANDYA

Total positive cases in Mandya	:	15
Death toll so far in Mandya	:	0

KARNATAKA & INDIA

Total positive cases in Karnataka	:	463
Persons cured / discharged	:	150
Death toll so far in Karnataka	:	18
Total active cases in India	:	17,610
Persons cured / discharged	:	4,748
Death toll so far in India	:	718

(Note: Some of Mysuru data are as on Apr. 23. Media bulletin of Apr. 24 unavailable)

COVID-19 District Emergency Control Room

The Mysuru District Emergency Control Room for COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is functional 24x7 and has a team of operators and medical professionals who are working in shifts. All related queries will be handled professionally and necessary guidance will be provided to all callers, according to Mysuru DC.

Mysuru Helpline numbers
1077 or 0821-2423800
Karnataka Helpline number: 104
Central Helpline number:
011-23978046
Email: ncov2019@gmail.com

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